



folklore

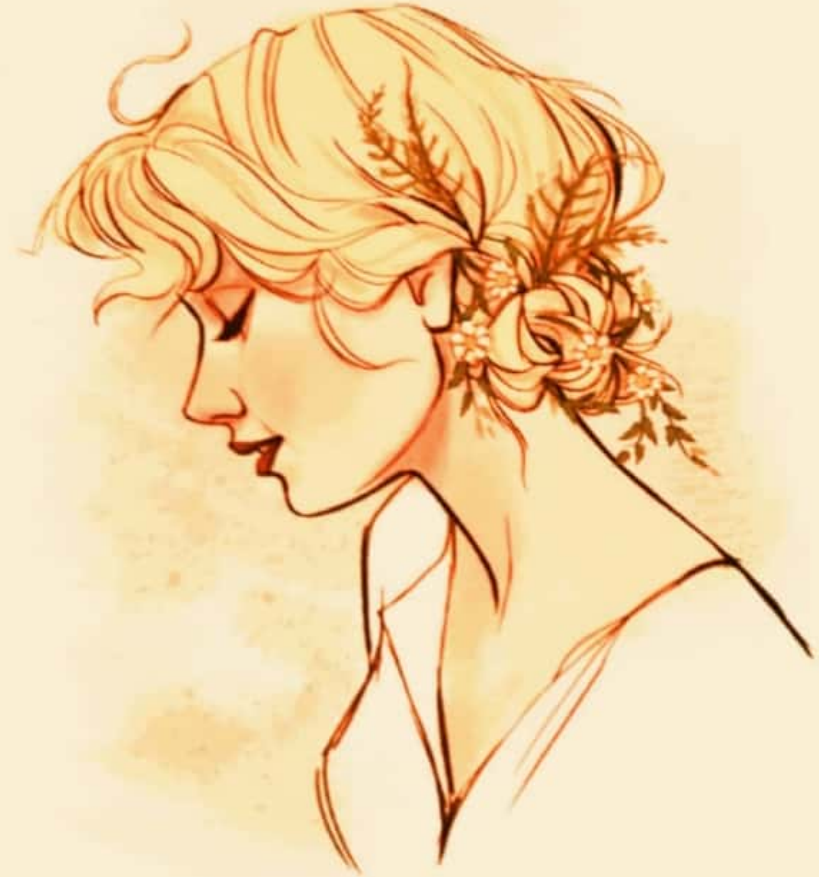


Taylor Swift

folklore
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written by Taylor Swift

the 1



I'm doing good, I'm on some new shit. Been saying "yes" instead of "no". I thought I saw you at the bus stop, I didn't though. I hit the ground running each night. I hit the Sunday matinée. You know the greatest films of all time were never made. I guess you never know, never know. And if you wanted me, you really should've showed. And if you never bleed, you're never gonna grow. And it's alright now. But we were something, don't you think so? Roaring twenties, tossing pennies in the pool. And if my wishes came true, it would've been you. In my defense, I have none for never leaving well enough alone. But it would've been fun if you would've been the one. I have this dream you're doing cool shit, having adventures on your own. You meet some woman on the internet and take her home. We never painted by the numbers, baby, but we were making it count. You know the greatest loves of all time are over now. I guess you never know, never know. And it's another day waking up alone. I persist and resist the temptation to ask you if one thing had been different, would everything be different today?

We were something, don't you think so? Rosé

flowing with your chosen family. And it would've been sweet if it could've been me. In my defense, I have none. For digging up the grave another time. But it would've been fun if you would've been the one.



cardigan



A friend to all is a friend to none. Chase two girls,
lose the one. When you are young, they assume
you know nothing. But I knew you, playing
hide-and-seek and giving me your weekends. I
knew you, your heartbeat on the High Line. Once
in twenty lifetimes.

And when I felt like I was an old cardigan under
someone's bed, you put me on and said I was your
favorite.

To kiss in cars and downtown
bars was all we needed.
You drew stars around
my scars, but now I'm
bleeding. 'Cause I knew
you, steppin' on the last
train, marked me like a bloodstain.

I knew you tried to change the ending,
Peter losing Wendy. I knew you,
leaving like a father, running like
water. And when you are young,
they assume you know nothing. But
I knew you'd linger like a tattoo kiss.
I knew you'd haunt all of my what-ifs.



The smell of smoke
would hang around
this long. 'Cause I
knew everything
when I was
young.



I knew I'd curse you for
the longest time. Chasing shadows in the grocery
line. I knew you'd miss me once the thrill expired
and you'd be standin' in my front porch light. And
I knew you'd come back to me.

And when I felt like I was an old cardigan under
someone's bed, you put me on and said I was your
favorite.

the last great american dynasty

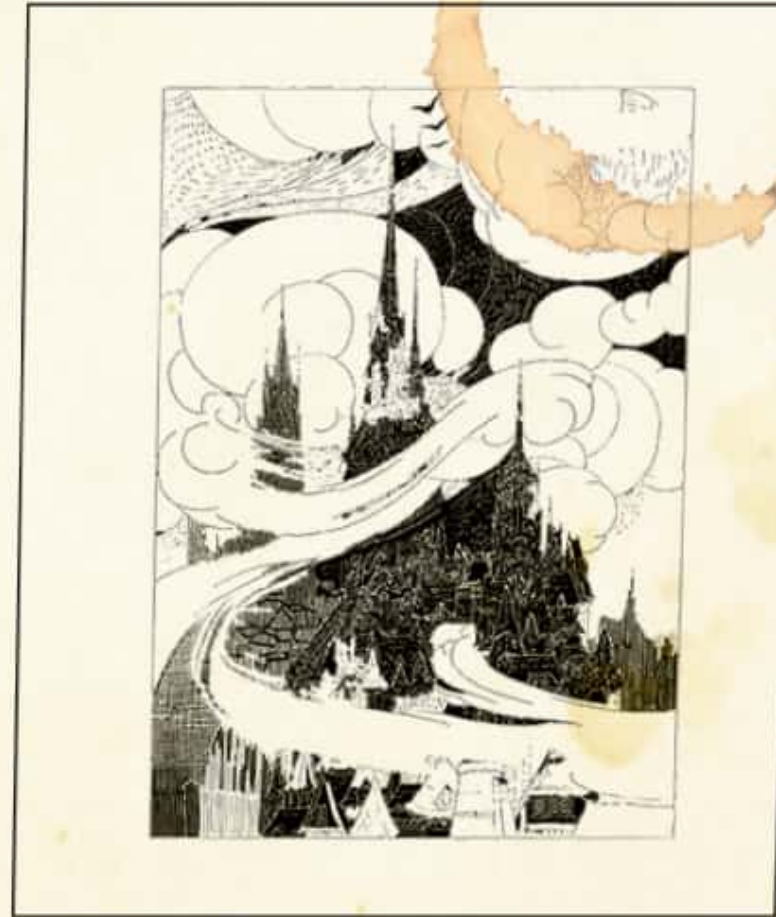


Rebekah rode up on the afternoon train, it was sunny. Her saltbox house on the coast took her mind off St. Louis.

Bill was the heir to the Standard Oil name and money, and the town said, "How did a middle-class divorcée do it?"

The wedding was charming, if a little gauche. There's only so far new money goes. They picked out a home and called it "Holiday House". Their parties were tasteful, if a little loud. The doctor had told him to settle down. It must have been her fault his heart gave out. And they said "there goes the last great American dynasty, who knows, if she never showed up, what could've been. There goes the maddest woman this town has ever seen". She had a marvelous time ruining everything.

Rebekah gave up on the Rhode Island set forever. Flew in all her Bitch Pack friends from the city. Filled the pool with champagne and swam with the big names. And blew through the money on the boys and the ballet, and losing on card game bets with Dali.



They say she was seen on occasion pacing the rocks, staring out at the midnight sea. And in a feud with her neighbor she stole his dog and dyed it key lime green.

Fifty years is a long time, Holiday House sat quietly on that beach, free of women with madness, their men and bad habits and then it was bought by me. Who knows, if I never showed up, what could've been.

exile



*I can see you standing, honey,
with his arms around your body,
laughin', but the joke's not funny at all.
And it took you five whole minutes
to pack us up and leave me with it,
holdin' all this love out here in the hall.*



*You didn't even hear me out
You never gave a warning sign
All this time
I never learned to read your mind
I couldn't turn things around
'Cause you never gave a warning sign*

*I can see you starin', honey,
like he's just your understudy,
like you'd get your knuckles bloody for me
Second, third, and hundredth chances,
balancin' on breaking branches.
Those eyes add insult to injury.*

*I think I've seen this film before
And I didn't like the ending
You're not my homeland anymore
So what am I defending now?
You were my town, now I'm in exile seein' you out
I think I've seen this film before
So I'm leavin' out the side door
So step right out, there is no amount
Of crying I can do for you
All this time
We always walked a very thin line*

*You didn't even hear me out
I gave so many signs*

*Never learned to read my mind
You never turned things around
I gave so many signs*

All this time

my tears ricochet



We gather here, we line up, weepin' in a sunlit room and if I'm on fire, you'll be made of ashes, too. Even on my worst day, did I deserve, babe all the hell you gave me? 'Cause I loved you, I swear I loved you 'til my dying day.



I didn't have it in myself to go with grace. And you're the hero flying around, saving face. And if I'm dead to you, why are you at the wake? Cursing my name, wishing I stayed. Look at how my tears ricochet.

We gather stones, never knowing what they'll mean. Some to throw, some to make a diamond ring. You know I didn't want to have to haunt you, but what a ghostly scene. You wear the same jewels that I gave you as you bury me.

I didn't have it in myself to go with grace. 'Cause when I'd fight, you used to tell me I was brave. And if I'm dead to you, why are you at the wake? Cursing my name, wishing I stayed. Look at how my tears ricochet

And I can go anywhere I want, anywhere I want, just not home. And you can aim for my heart, go for blood, but you would still miss me in your bones. And I still talk to you when I'm screaming at the sky. And when you can't sleep at night you hear my stolen lullabies. I didn't have it in myself to go with grace. And so the battleships will sink beneath the waves. You had to kill me, but it killed you just the same. Cursing my name, wishing I stayed, you turned into your worst fears.

And you're tossing out blame, drunk on this pain, crossing out the good years. And you're cursing my name, wishing I stayed.

Look at how my tears ricochet.



mirrorball



I want you to know I'm a mirrorball. I'll show you every version of yourself tonight. I'll get you out on the floor, shimmering beautiful, and when I break, it's in a million pieces.

Hush, when no one is around, my dear. You'll find me on my tallest tiptoes, spinning in my highest heels, love, shining just for you.

Hush, I know they said the end is near, but I'm still on my tallest tiptoes, spinning in my highest heels, love, shining just for you.

I want you to know I'm a mirrorball. I can change everything about me to fit in.

You are not like the regulars, the masquerade revelers, drunk as they watch my shattered edges glisten.

And they called off the circus, burned the disco down. When they sent home the horses and the rodeo clowns. I'm still on that tightrope I'm still trying everything to get you laughing at me.

And I'm still a believer, but I don't know why I've never been a natural, all I do is try,

try,

try.

I'm still on that trapeze, I'm still trying everything to keep you looking at me because I'm a mirrorball.

I'm a mirrorball.

And I'll show you every version of yourself tonight



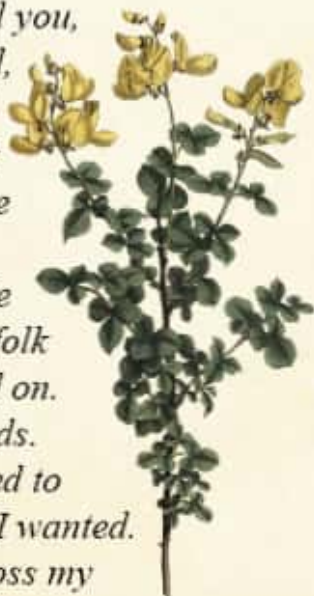
seven



Please picture me in the trees. I hit my peak at seven feet in the swing over the creek. I was too scared to jump in, but I was high in the sky with Pennsylvania under me. Are there still beautiful things?

Sweet tea in the summer. Cross your heart, won't tell no other. And though I can't recall your face, I still got love for you. Your braids like a pattern. Love you to the Moon and to Saturn. Passed down like folk songs, the love lasts so long.

And I've been meaning to tell you,
I think your house is haunted,
your dad is always mad and
that must be why. And I think
you should come live with me
and we can be pirates, then
you won't have to cry, or hide
in the closet. And just like a folk
song, our love will be passed on.
Please picture me in the weeds.
Before I learned civility I used to
scream ferociously any time I wanted.
Sweet tea in the summer. Cross my



heart, won't tell no other. And though I can't recall your face, I still got love for you.

Pack your dolls and a sweater; we'll move to India forever. Passed down like folk songs, our love lasts so long.



august



Salt air, and the rust on your door, I never needed anything more. Whispers of "Are you sure?" "Never have I ever before".

But I can see us lost in the memory, August slipped away into a moment in time, 'cause it was never mine. And I can see us twisted in bedsheets, August sipped away like a bottle of wine, 'cause you were never mine.

Your back beneath the sun, wishin' I could write my name on it. Will you call when you're back at school? I remember thinkin' I had you.

Back when we were still changin' for the better. Wanting was enough. For me, it was enough to live for the hope of it all. Canceled plans just in case you'd call and say, "Meet me behind the mall".

So much for summer love and saying "us", 'cause you weren't mine to lose.

But I can see us lost in the memory, August slipped away into a moment in time, 'cause it was never mine. And I can see us twisted in bedsheets,

♡ *August sipped away like a bottle of wine, 'cause*
♡ *you were never mine.*



Cause you were never mine.

Never mine

But do you remember? Remember when I pulled up and said "Get in the car", and then canceled my plans just in case you'd call? Back when I was livin' for the hope of it all, for the hope of it all.

"Meet me behind the mall"

this is me trying



I've been having a hard time adjusting, I had the shiniest wheels, now they're rusting. I didn't know if you'd care if I came back, I have a lot of regrets about that.

Pulled the car off the road to the lookout, could've followed my fears all the way down. And maybe I don't quite know what to say, but I'm here in your doorway.

*I just wanted you to know that this is me trying
They told me all of my cages were mental, so I got
wasted like all my potential. And my words shoot
to kill when I'm mad, I have a lot of regrets about
that.*

I was so ahead of the curve, the curve became a

sphere. Fell behind all my classmates and I ended up here, pouring out my heart to a stranger, but I didn't pour the whiskey.

I just wanted you to know that this is me trying.

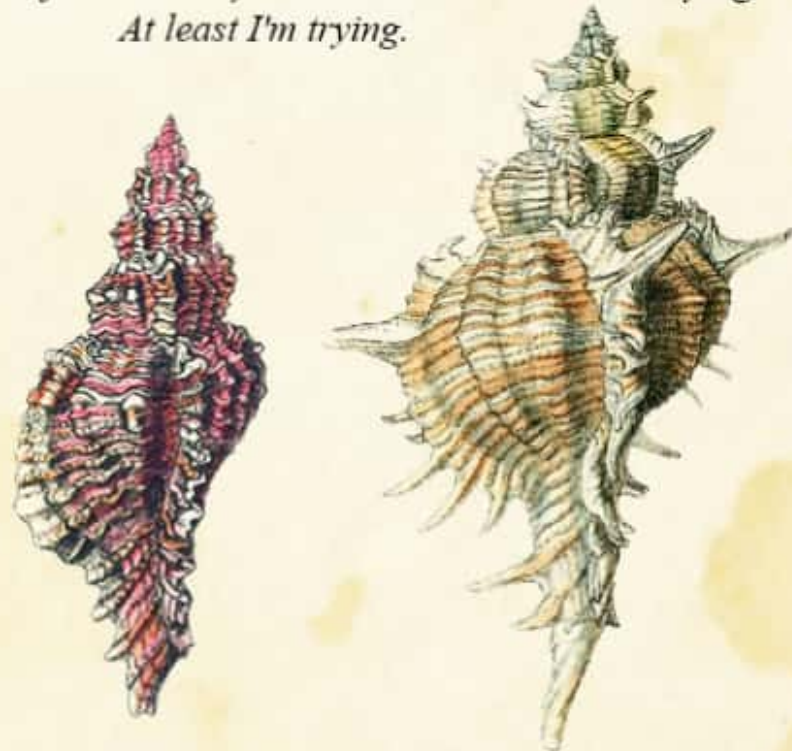
At least I'm trying.

And it's hard to be at a party when I feel like an open wound. It's hard to be anywhere these days when all I want is you.

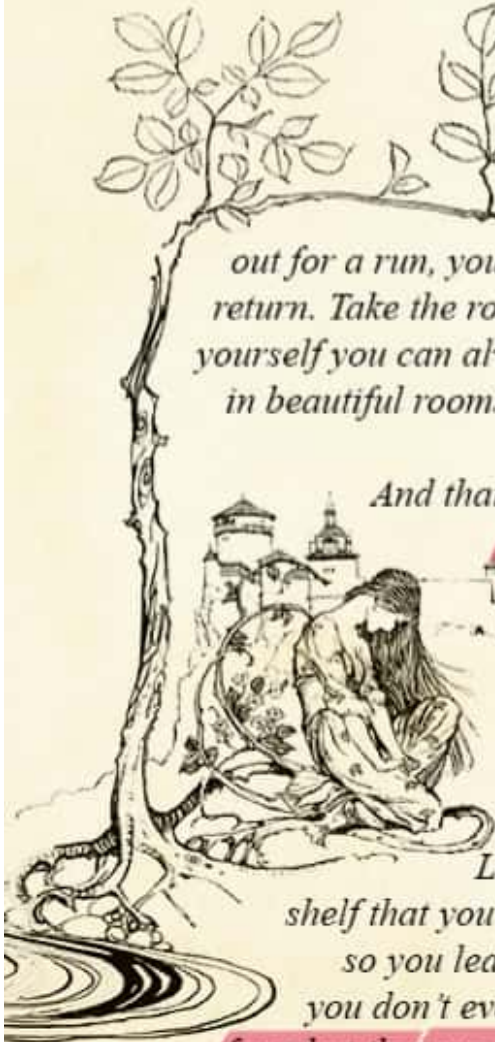
You're a flashback in a film reel on the one screen in my town. And I just wanted you to know that this is me trying —and maybe I don't quite know what to say.

I just wanted you to know that this is me trying.

At least I'm trying.



illicit affairs



Make sure nobody sees you leave, hood over your head, keep your eyes down. Tell your friends you're out for a run, you'll be flushed when you return. Take the road less traveled by. Tell yourself you can always stop. What started in beautiful rooms, ends with meetings in parking lots.

And that's the thing about illicit affairs and clandestine meetings and longing stares. It's born from just one single glance, but it dies, and it dies, and it dies a million little times.

Leave the perfume on the shelf that you picked out just for him, so you leave no trace behind, like you don't even exist. Take the words for what they are, a dwindling, mercurial

high, a drug that only worked the first few hundred times.

And that's the thing about illicit affairs and clandestine meetings and stolen stares. They show their truth one single time, but they lie, and they lie, and they lie a million little times.

And you wanna scream don't call me "kid," don't call me "baby". Look at this godforsaken mess that you made me, you showed me colors you know I can't see with anyone else.

Don't call me "kid," don't call me "baby". Look at this idiotic fool that you made me, you taught me a secret language I can't speak with anyone else.

And you know damn well for you, I would ruin myself a million little times.



i still
love you

invisible string



Green was the color of the grass where I used to read at Centennial Park, I used to think I would meet somebody there.

Teal was the color of your shirt when you were sixteen at the yogurt shop you used to work at to make a little money.

*Time, curious time, gave me
no compasses, gave me
no signs.*



Were there clues I didn't see? And isn't it just so pretty to think all along there was some invisible string tying you to me?

Bad was the blood of the song in the cab on your first trip to LA, you ate at my favorite spot for dinner.

Bold was the waitress on our three-year trip getting lunch down by the Lakes, she said I looked like an American singer.

Time, mystical time, cutting me open, then healing me fine.

Were there clues I didn't see? And isn't it just so pretty to think all along there was some invisible string tying you to me?

A string that pulled me out of all the wrong arms, right into that dive bar. Something wrapped all of my past mistakes in barbed wire. Chains around my demons, wool to brave the seasons.

One single thread of gold tied me to you.

Cold was the steel of my axe to grind for the boys who broke my heart, now I send their babies presents. Gold was the color of the leaves when I showed you around Centennial Park.



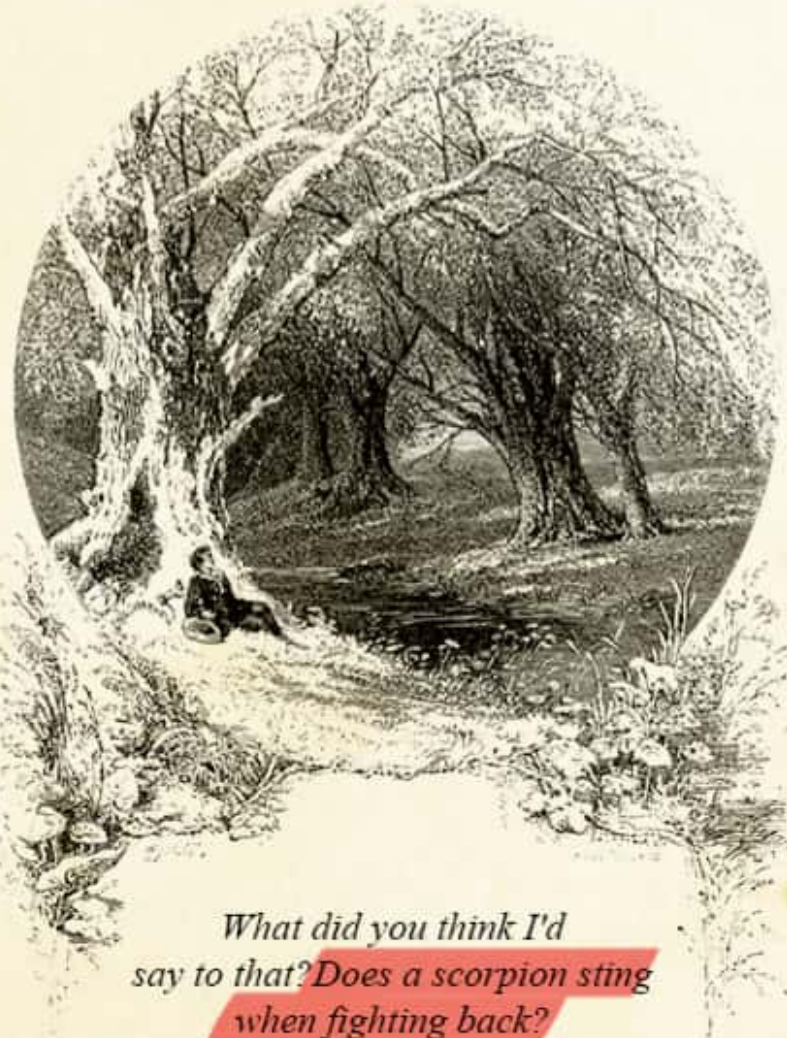
*Hell was the journey
but it brought me heaven.*

Time, wondrous time, gave me the blues and the purple-pink skies. And it's cool, baby, with me.



And isn't it just so pretty to think all along there was some invisible string tying you to me?

mad woman



What did you think I'd
say to that? *Does a scorpion sting
when fighting back?*
They strike to kill, and you know I will.

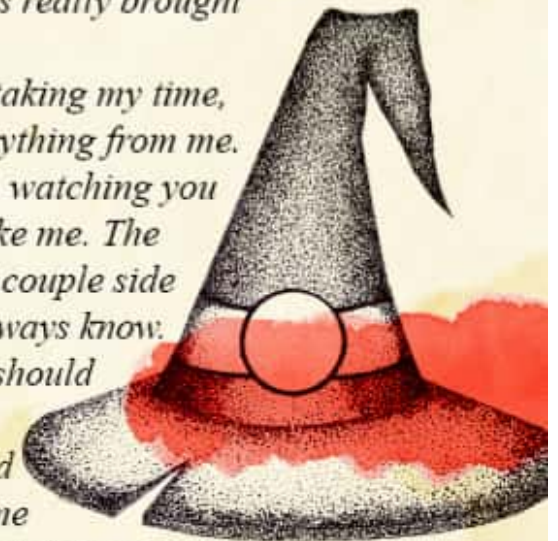
What do you sing on your drive home? Do you see
my face in the neighbor's lawn? Does she smile?
Or does she mouth, "Fuck you forever"?

Every time you call me crazy, I get more crazy,
what about that? And when you say I seem angry,
I get more angry.

And there's nothing like a *mad woman*, what a
shame she went mad. No one likes a mad woman,
you made her like that. And you'll poke that bear
'til her claws come out, and you find something to
wrap your noose around. And there's nothing like
a mad woman.

Now I breathe flames each time I talk, my cannons
all firin' at your yacht, they say "move on," but you
know I won't. *And women like hunting witches too
doing your dirtiest work for you.* It's obvious that
wanting me dead has really brought
you two together.

I'm taking my time, taking my time,
'cause you took everything from me.
Watching you climb, watching you
climb over people like me. The
master of spin has a couple side
flings, good wives always know.
She should be mad, should
be scathing like me,
but no one likes a mad
woman, what a shame
she went mad. You made her like that.



epiphany



Keep your helmet, keep your life, son. Just a flesh wound, here's your rifle.

Crawling up the beaches now. "Sir, I think he's bleeding out". And some things you just can't speak about.

With you I serve, with you I fall down. Watch you breathe in, watch you breathing out.

Something med school did not cover. Someone's daughter; someone's mother.

Holds your hand through plastic now. "Doc, I think she's crashing out". And some things you just can't speak about.

Only twenty minutes to sleep, but you dream of some epiphany.

Just one single glimpse of relief to make some sense of what you've seen.



With you I serve, with you I fall down. Watch you breathe in, watch you breathing out.

Only twenty minutes to sleep, but you dream of some epiphany. Just one single glimpse of relief to make some sense of what you've seen.



betty



Betty, I won't make assumptions about why you switched your homeroom, but I think it's 'cause of me. Betty, one time I was riding on my skateboard when I passed your house, it's like I couldn't breathe.

You heard the rumors from Inez, you can't believe a word she says most times, but this time it was true. The worst thing that I ever did was what I did to you.

But if I just showed up at your party, would you have me? Would you want me? Would you tell me to go fuck myself, or lead me to the garden? In the garden, would you trust me if I told you it was just a summer thing? I'm only seventeen, I don't know anything, but I know I miss you.

Betty, I know where it all went wrong, your favorite song was playing from the far side of the gym. I was nowhere to be found, I hate the crowds, you know that. Plus, I saw you dance with him.

I was walking home on broken



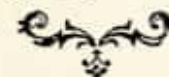
cobblestones, just thinking of you when she pulled up like a figment of my worst intentions. She said "James, get in, let's drive".

Those days turned into nights slept next to her, but I dreamt of you all summer long.

Betty, I'm here on your doorstep and I planned it out for weeks now, but it's finally sinkin' in.

Betty, right now is the last time I can dream about what happens when you see my face again.

The only thing I wanna do is make it up to you, so I showed up at your party. Yeah, I showed up at your party, will you have me? Will you love me? Will you kiss me on the porch in front of all your stupid friends? If you kiss me, will it be just like I dreamed it? Will it patch your broken wings? I'm only seventeen, I don't know anything, but I know I miss you. Standing in your cardigan, kissin' in my car again. Stopped at a streetlight, you know I miss you.



peace



Our coming-of-age has come and gone, suddenly this summer, it's clear. I never had the courage of my convictions as long as danger is near. And it's just around the corner, darlin', 'cause it lives in me. No, I could never give you peace.

But I'm a fire and I'll keep your brittle heart warm, if your cascade, ocean wave blues come. All these people think love's for show, but I would die for you in secret. The devil's in the details, but you got a friend in me.

Would it be enough if I could never give you peace?

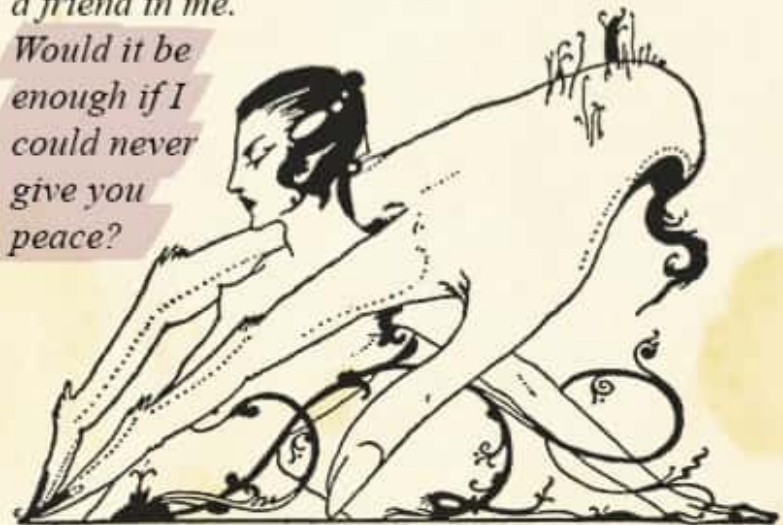
Your integrity makes me seem small, you paint dreamscapes on the wall. I talk shit with my friends, it's like I'm wasting your honor.

And you know that I'd swing with you for the fences, sit with you in the trenches. Give you my wild, give you a child. Give you the silence that only comes when two people understand each other, family that I chose, now that I see your brother as my brother. Is it enough?

But there's robbers to the east, clowns to the west I'd give you my sunshine, give you my best, but the rain is always gonna come if you're standin' with me.

But I'm a fire and I'll keep your brittle heart warm If your cascade, ocean wave blues come. All these people think love's for show, but I would die for you in secret. The devil's in the details, but you got a friend in me.

Would it be enough if I could never give you peace?



hoax



*My only one. My smoking
gun. My eclipsed sun,
this has broken
me down.*

*My twisted knife.
My sleepless night.
My winless fight,
this has frozen my
ground.*

*Stood on the cliffside
screaming, "Give me a
reason". Your faithless love's
the only hoax I believe in.*

*Don't want no other shade of
blue but you, no other sadness
in the world would do.*

*My best laid plan. Your sleight of hand. My barren
land, I am ash from your fire.*

*Stood on the cliffside screaming, "Give me a
reason". Your faithless love's the only hoax I
believe in. Don't want no other shade of blue but
you, no other sadness in the world would do.*



*My eclipsed
sun,
this has
broken me
down*

*You know I left a part of me back in New York. You
knew the hero died so what's the movie for? You
knew it still hurts underneath my scars from when
they pulled me apart.*

*You knew the password so I let you in the door. You
knew you won so what's the point of keeping
score? You knew it still hurts underneath my scars
from when they pulled me apart, but what you did
was just as dark. Darling, this was just as hard as
when they pulled me apart.*

*My only one. My kingdom come undone. My
broken drum, you have beaten my heart.*

*Don't want no other shade of blue but you, no
other sadness in the world would do.*

the lakes



Is it romantic how all my elegies eulogize me?
I'm not cut out for all these cynical clones, these
hunters with cell phones.

Take me to the Lakes where all the poets went to
die. I don't belong and, my beloved, neither do you.
Those Windermere peaks look like a perfect place
to cry. I'm setting off, but not without my muse.
What should be over burrowed under my skin, in
heart-stopping waves of hurt.
I've come too far to watch some namedropping
sleaze, tell me what are my words worth.
Take me to the Lakes where all the poets went to

die. I don't belong and, my beloved, neither do you.
Those Windermere peaks look like a perfect place
to cry. I'm setting off, but not without my muse.
I want auroras and sad prose. I want to watch
wisteria grow right over my bare feet, 'cause I
haven't moved in years, and I want you right here.
A red rose grew up out of ice frozen ground with
no one around to tweet it. While I bathe in
cliffside pools with my calamitous love and
insurmountable grief.
Take me to the Lakes where all the poets went to
die. I don't belong and, my beloved, neither do you.
Those Windermere peaks look like a perfect place
to cry. I'm setting off, but not without my muse.
No, not without you.

